

The practical application of these generalities to business is set out in the numerous works composed to expound the rules of Christian conduct in the varied relations of-life. If one may judge by their titles—

Navigation Spiritualized, Husbandry Spiritualized, The Religious Weaver^w—there must have been a considerable

demand for books conducive to professional edifica-

tion. A characteristic specimen is *The Tradesman's*

*Calling*** by Richard Steele. The author, after being

deprived of a country living under the Act of Uni-

formity, spent his declining years as minister of a

congregation at Armourers Hall in London, and may be

presumed to have understood the spiritual requirements

of the City in his day, when the heroic age of Puritanism

was almost over and enthusiasm was no longer a virtue.

No one who was writing a treatise on economic ethics

to-day would address himself primarily to the inde-

pendent shopkeeper, as the figure most representative

of the business community, and Steele's book throws

a flood of light on the problems and outlook of the

bourgeoisie, in an age before the centre of economic

gravity had shifted from the substantial tradesman to

the exporting merchant, the industrial capitalist and

the financier.

Like Baxter, he is acquainted with the teaching of

earlier authorities as to equity in

bargaining. He is
doubtful, however, of its practical utility.
Obvious
frauds in matters of quality and weight
are to be
avoided; an honest tradesman ought not
to corner
the " market, or " accumulate two or three
callings
merely to increase his riches," or oppress
the poor;
nor should he seek more than "a
reasonable propor-
tion of gain/" or "lie on the catch to
make [his]
markets of others' straits." But Steele
rejects as use-
less in practice the various objective
standards of a
reasonable profit—cost of production,
standard of life,
customary prices—which had been suggested
in earlier
ages, and concludes that the individual
must judge for